

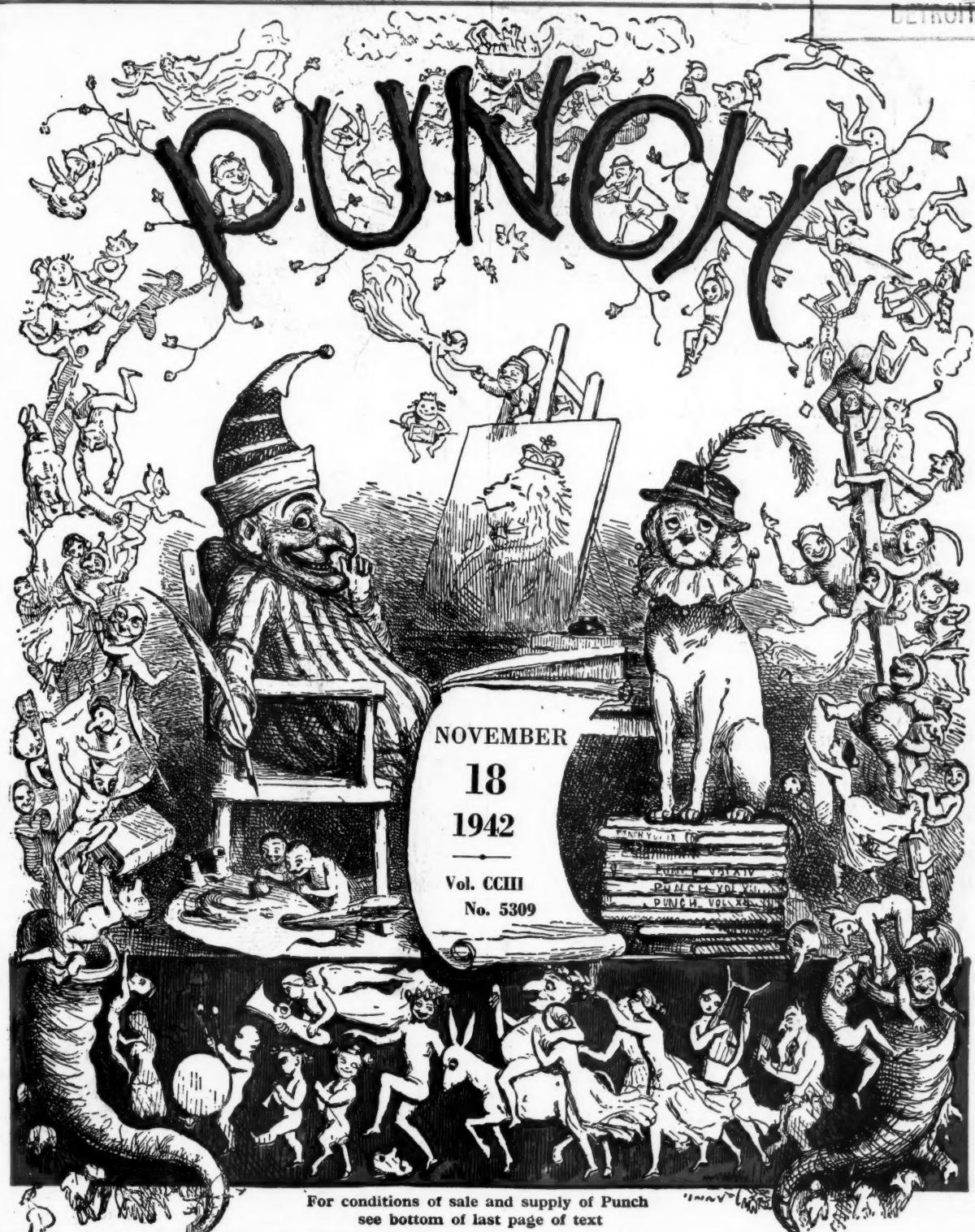
# DUNLOP

-THE FIRST TYRE IN THE WORLD  
22 1942

22 1942

2H/143

~~DEINOTT~~



**For conditions of sale and supply of Punch  
see bottom of last page of text**

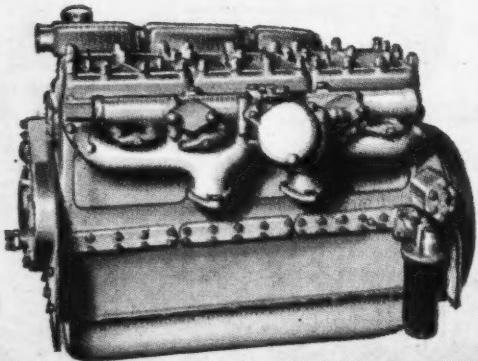
**"TripleX"**—the safety glass

# Widespread

The widespread success of Coventry Climax engines is due, not to a haphazard range of designs produced for odd requirements, but rather to specialisation upon a selected range.

This specialisation has resulted in engines of the utmost reliability, each specially suited to its duties and very widely adopted by users.

Moreover, wherever those duties have called for special auxiliary equipment, we have developed and perfected that equipment, thus producing from the combined installation an efficiency which hitherto was unattained.



## COVENTRY CLIMAX ENGINES LTD

COVENTRY ENGLAND

SAVE FUEL

*Keep warm inside*

*with*



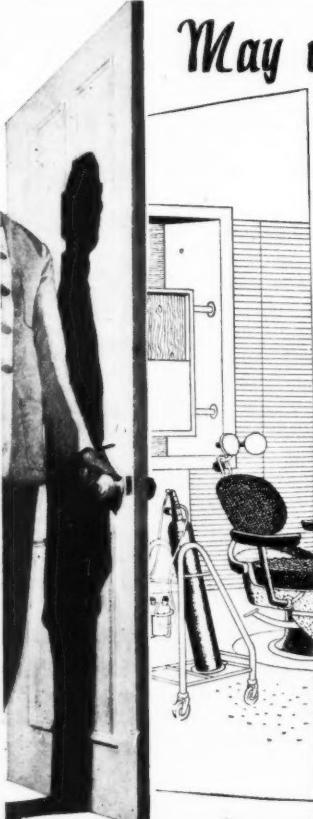
Unexcelled  
since 1706  
for Quality



## CROSSE & BLACKWELL'S

MOCK TURTLE VEGETABLE KIDNEY MULLIGATAWNY CONSONME

*May we have this  
out with you?*



There are lots of interesting things at a dentist's which, perhaps, you wouldn't be conscious of when you go there in the ordinary way, because you would not be conscious. But let's not dwell on that. What we want to talk to you about is the apparatus itself. It's a mistaken idea to imagine that the gas is the sort which cooks the ration and comes from the local gas works. It doesn't, it comes out of a 'bottle', and to you it's not really a bottle, either, it's a steel tube made into a cylinder. That's the point, a steel tube—and a very special kind of steel tube, designed to deal with storage at high pressures. Time and time again in business and factory, steel tubes turn up to do the job. Saving weight here! Giving strength there! Applying themselves successfully to tasks which 'can't be done'!

Issued by Tube Investments Limited  
STEEL TUBES ADVISORY CENTRE • BIRMINGHAM



BALKAN SOBRANIE  
CIGARETTES & TOBACCO

## Balkan Sobranie and Sobranie

The difference between Balkan Sobranie and Sobranie is the difference between rarest perfection—which you will be able to enjoy occasionally—and available quality which you can enjoy between whiles. Do not therefore blame your tobacconist when he offers you authentic Sobranie in place of Balkan Sobranie—he is doing his best and so are we.



SOBRANIE LTD. LONDON, E.C.I.

There are still limited supplies of Young's Morecambe Shrimps—freshly peeled—spiced—cooked. 1 Beauchamp Place, London, S.W.1 and at Morecambe.

No post orders.

## YOUNG'S Morecambe SHRIMPS

*The  
"Antiquary"*

Finest  
Scotch Whisky

OF RARE:  
DISTINCTION  
WITH THE:  
RIGHT AGE:  
COMMANDING  
RESPECT:

Proprietors:  
J. & W. HARDIE  
SCOTLAND

**WARDONIA BLADES**  
FIT ALL  
3-PEG  
RAZORS  
FOR BETTER SHAVES

SMALL PACKET 1/- LARGE PACKET 2/-  
Plus Purchase Tax. Ask for them at N.A.F.I.



BY APPOINTMENT

IDRIS LIMITED, LONDON, MAKERS OF QUALITY  
TABLE WATERS THROUGH FIVE SUCCESSIVE REIGNS



## Wisdom for War Time

THE saying "What can't be cured must be endured" comes home to us very forcibly in these days of restrictions and shortages, and we do well to accept its simple philosophy. So if and when your favourite biscuits fail to come your way, give quiet thought to what may be the reasons. Saving of shipping space, saving of fuel, saving of man-power, saving of transport, all play a part in restricting the output and distribution of biscuits, but they are factors which we feel sure all will readily appreciate.

Remember

## M'C VITIE & PRICE BISCUITS

M'C VITIE &amp; PRICE LTD. • EDINBURGH • LONDON • MANCHESTER



As in a symphony so also in the perfecting of a true Vermouth there must be the hand of the artist. Good Vermouth, whether it came from France, Italy or any other country, has always been produced from the blending of white wine with aromatic herbs and spices. That the creation of a great Vermouth calls for something more has long been recognised. To achieve real character and distinction there must be, as there is with Votrix, the inspiration of genius.

## VERMOUTH VOTRIX

is produced at the Vine Products vintnery in Surrey, but owing to the unavoidable wartime restriction of supplies you may often find it difficult to obtain. Votrix "Dry," bottle size 6/9. Votrix "Sweet," bottle size 6/3.



It's difficult to tell...

### ONE FROM T'OTHER

It is hard to tell the difference between one orange and another, or between orange juice and Idris Orange Squash. For Idris contains the genuine unadulterated orange juice. There's nothing "ersatz" about it. That's why Idris is such a delicious drink. A pity we cannot supply our customers with as much as they want!



## IDRIS

Table Waters



**Steady!**

—that's the order in these days of shortage.

However tough on your self-restraint, that extra glass simply must be foregone for the duration; which makes it doubly enjoyable, and doubly precious.

## CHAPLINS CELESTA SHERRY 13/6 and CONCORD PORT 12/6

Supplied to the public through the Retail Trade ONLY.

W. H. CHAPLIN & CO. LTD. Estd. 1867  
Wholesale Wine and Spirit Merchants, Distillers  
and Vineyard Proprietors. LONDON • GLASGOW

## Banking in War Time

The Midland Bank stands ready in war time, as it did in the days of peace, to offer its services to those who need them.

Whatever your position—whether you are in the Imperial or allied forces, some other field of war or national work, or pursuing your ordinary activities—you may rely upon this great Bank to conduct with efficiency and tact all business entrusted to its care.

The manager of the local branch is ready to discuss in strict confidence questions relating to any banking services you may require. He will be pleased to explain the facilities offered by the Midland Bank, established over a century ago but always modern in its methods and outlook.

## MIDLAND BANK LIMITED

Head Office: Poultry, London, E.C.2

I say—"Snacks" need  
**Yorkshire Relish**



*Coming Sir!  
THIN or THICK Sir?*

NEW CONTROLLED PRICES:—

THIN 1d. and 1/3d. THICK 7d. and 1d.  
Supplies limited—use sparingly

Made by Goodall, Backhouse & Co., Ltd., Leeds

ALL CLEAR



The time will come when you need no longer miss a good picture for want of a film. Meanwhile, the output of Selo films is necessarily restricted, but all available supplies are distributed through approved dealers. If your photographic dealer is out of stock, please do not write to the manufacturers: Ilford Limited cannot supply amateur photographers direct.

**SELO FILMS**  
Made by ILFORD LIMITED, ILFORD, LONDON

You are not there to help . . .



. . . but The Salvation Army is!

THEY live in a world of their own—a world of stifling dust-filled days, of chill, black nights. To such men in the Middle East The Salvation Army Canteens mean much. Their visits break the monotony of that desert world. Manned by carefully trained Salvationists able to deal with personal problems and wise in giving spiritual guidance, Red Shield Canteens mean something more than refreshments, books or a friendly chat.



1,200 Salvation Army Leave Hostels, Clubs and Canteens are constantly serving men and women of the United Nations Forces in camps, ports and cities at home and overseas. New Clubs are needed at once in India, Egypt and scores of centres in Great Britain. Will you help us to open them?

Please send a donation to-day to  
General Carpenter,  
101, Queen Victoria St.,  
London, E.C.4.

**The Army that serves on every Front**

(Registered under the War Charities Act, 1910.)

## Health-Hints

—by 'Sanitas'

## WHY DOCTORS AND NURSES KEEP WELL

DOCTORS and Nurses are constantly coming into contact with disease. They are subject to germ-attack every day. Yet they keep well.

It is because they make such regular use of a good personal disinfectant. They wash their hands and rinse their mouth and throat regularly with disinfectant. *Thus they destroy the germs before these can "catch hold" and breed.*

Thousands of Doctors and Nurses use SANITAS.

The SAFE PERSONAL DISINFECTANT—and pleasant. Does not smart, burn or irritate. To-day, in this age of "crowds," regular use of SANITAS—wash, as a gargle—is more necessary than ever!

At your Chemist. 1/1d., 1/8d. per bottle (including Purchase Tax).

## SANITAS

THE FAMILY SAFEGUARD

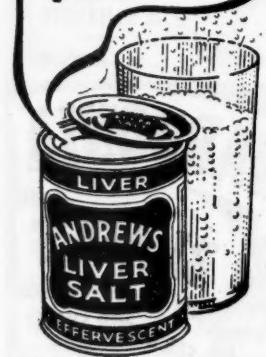
ON REQUEST

Valuable War Memorandum on prevention and treatment of infectious diseases—Write (enclosing 1d. stamp) to

SANITAS CO. LTD. (Dept. P.U.11),  
51, Clapham Rd., S.W.9.

**TO STAY HEALTHY  
remember  
Inner Cleanliness**

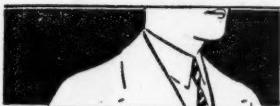
*Excuse me—  
INNER  
CLEANLINESS  
is easy with  
ANDREWS*



One size only, 8 ozs. 1/10d.  
including purchase tax

(25-1)

## The World's most famous Collar



World-wide fame does not come undeserved. Van Heusen's popularity is due to *comfort* and *style*; they launder well and last longer.



**"VAN  
HEUSEN"**

Regd. Trade Mark

SEMI-STIFF COLLARS

Sole Manufacturers: Harding, Tilton and Hartley, Ltd., Taunton, Somerset.

## Rubber to erase the Axis

Nearly all the world's natural sources of rubber supply are in enemy hands. To help make up for this serious loss every ounce of waste rubber must be saved—for it can be reclaimed and brought into service again to help the war effort.

## What do I do...?

I search through my house, garage and garden shed and turn out every possible scrap of worn-out or unwanted rubber—rubber gloves, hot-water bottles, tyres gone beyond repair, discarded Wellingtons, rubber soles, etc. I put out all this waste rubber separately from other salvage, for collection by my local Authority.

*Issued by the Ministry of Information  
Space presented to the Nation by  
the Brewers' Society*

## Presents and the personal touch

The choice of presents will be more difficult than ever this Christmas, but if you can come to Heal's we can almost certainly help you.

Our price list of presents may not be sent free to our customers as in past years, but if you will send us a 2½d stamp we will gladly post you a copy.

## HEAL'S

196 TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD · W·1

**Heath & Heather Ltd**  
HERB SPECIALISTS



Our country is second to none in its resources of medicinal herbs and with stocks assured, clients will be glad to know that the majority of Heath & Heather's remedies continue in full supply. These are listed in the "Book of Herbs," a copy of which (price 2d.) may be had on application to HEATH & HEATHER LTD., Herb Specialists, ST. ALBANS

**Schweppes**  
**MALVERN**  
**SPA**



Now that imported waters are no longer available—try something you will like better.

*Just as delightful  
blended with spirits*



Owing to the control of essential raw materials, Brolac and Murac are not being manufactured to-day... and how thankful are users now for the quality and durability of these paints. To-day the high-grade materials and the skill of our chemists are employed in the service of the country... to-morrow they will once more play their part in making a brighter, better Britain.

**BROLAC**  
DOUBLE PROTECTION PAINT  
with the enamel finish

**MURAC**  
FLAT FINISH FOR WALLS

John Hall & Sons (Bristol & London) Ltd., Broadmead, Bristol. London Office & Warehouses: 1-5, St. Pancras Way, N.W.1. The Strathclyde Paint Co. Ltd., Dalmarnock, Glasgow



Mother knows the value of OXO in helping out the rations and all the family loves the beefy flavour of dishes made with OXO. That's why OXO is such a firm family favourite.



OF SPECIAL VALUE FOR GROWING CHILDREN



And could anything be simpler? This is all you do.  
Yes, do tell me again.  
Take this much powder... dissolve it in warm water... stir and immerse your dentures overnight or for 20 minutes.  
And it always removes the film and stains?  
It certainly does.  
When did you first hear about 'Steradent'?  
When I was first evacuated here. The chemist advised me to try it.  
I'll call on him tomorrow!

# Steradent

REGD

*cleans and sterilizes false teeth*

Directions: Half tumbler of warm water. Add 'Steradent'—the cap of the tin full. STIR. Steep dentures overnight or 20 minutes. Rinse well under tap.



## Make the most of every fill

More FOUR SQUARE is being smoked to-day than ever before. We are manufacturing up to the limit of our quota. There is only one way to make supplies go round and that is for everyone to make sure that he doesn't waste a shred of the precious leaf. The commonest cause of waste is the leaving of a bottle of unsmoked tobacco at the bottom of the pipe. This can be prevented by crumpling a small piece of paper (a cigarette paper for choice) into a ball and putting it at the bottom of the bowl before filling. ■

■ Look out for the many other FOUR SQUARE hints appearing in our advertisements.  
GEORGE DOBIE & SON LTD., PAISLEY, SCOTLAND

## FOUR SQUARE

'Off whenever you can  
'On only when you must  
to HELP SAVE ELECTRICITY

Even the small amount of current used by

# MAZDA

## LAMPS

is well worth saving  
for the Nation . . .



B TH  
*Mazda Lamps Stay Bright Longer*

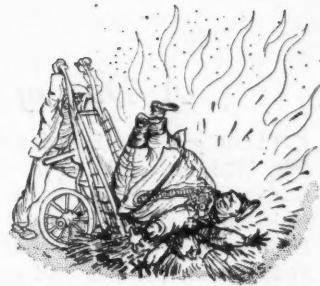
Made in England by The British Thomson-Houston Company Limited

3948



# PUNCHY

OR  
THE LONDON CHARIVARI!



Vol. CCIII No. 5309

November 18 1942

## Charivaria

"KEEP your telegrams short and sharp and help keep out the Hun," runs a slogan in a provincial post office. In fact, barb your wires.

Rome radio recently stated that Italian mobile columns had appeared behind the British lines in Egypt. True, and they are still being counted.



"I ordered a ham sandwich at a night-club," says a correspondent, "but when it arrived I didn't know what I had got." We know. Influence.

Many people have given up their dinner-gongs for salvage. Elderly butlers still in service are learning to boom before meals.

A critic declares that he was so interested in a new film that his pipe kept going out during the showing of it. It sounds as if it did not share his enthusiasm.

Paper economy is said to be stricter in Scotland. In 1939, Aberdeen residents sent out Christmas cards wishing their friends the compliments of the season for the duration.

### Half-way House

"Gentleman, semi-refined, wishes congenial person, employed daytime, to share 4-roomed spacious Flat."

*New Zealand Paper.*

A New York police official states that U.S. confidence tricksters usually come to England early in Easter and return before June. Here they come gathering mutts in May.

A City worker bemoans the fact that an egg for tea in a restaurant is now a thing of the past. It often was in peace-time, too.

A man described as an artist and poet was charged with breaking into a paint factory near Wolverhampton. His plea that he was only after a bit of local colour was not accepted.

"Vichy authorities have become very nervous regarding British naval activity in the Mediterranean," says a writer. They didn't like the cut of our Gib.

A station waiting-room chimney recently caught fire. It was successfully extinguished, however, before it spread to the grate.



"I can't see that the end of the Old School Tie is in sight," says a correspondent. Neither can we, unless waistcoats are being cut lower.

Rome is reported to be very little cheered by the suggestion that ROMMEL left Italian troops to fight the rearguard action in Egypt so that if the tide did turn they would have the honour of being in the van instead of the cart.



"The enemy, oot, fell back from that fairly big below-sea-level depression called Deir el Munassib (deir means depression)." —*Daily Paper.*

Yes, but what does "oot" mean?

A group of foreign journalists were recently shown over the Bank of England. They were not allowed to take any notes.

## A Day of Days

**S**LOW grunting through the impenetrable soup  
With little jerks as though it had the croup,  
All the world lost to left and all to right  
And neither kerb nor any post in sight—  
Till the conductor had to walk and lead  
And light the paper he had meant to read  
And wave it for a torch—

And then we stopped  
And some despaired and took the plunge and dropped  
Into the blinding surge and reeking jam,  
But some remained still faithful and said "Damn.  
Have you the least idea where we are now?"  
"Not any more than if I was a cow,"  
Said the conductor. "Have you seen the news?—  
Might be a little way past Wilson's mews—  
Ho, yus! the sun has dawned on us at last"  
(The bus behind then bumped us and stood fast)  
"Never did I behold a world so bright.  
See what the Premier says: the good old light  
Has caught the 'elmets of our Libyan troops  
And what about the Yanks and these here swoops  
On to the Mediterranean coast?  
I reckon old man Hitler, he's on toast,  
And Mussolini talkin' to his pal—  
I was in France three years—and that Laval!  
It might get clearer and it might get wuss,  
At any rate you're safe inside the bus.  
Supposin' I was a Fifth Columnist  
I might let on there was a kind of mist,  
Maybe we're in the middle of the road,  
Maybe we aren't—you send for Mr. Joad—  
We've got to keep these Jerries in the dark,  
It's always thicker close to Regent's Park.  
Yus! As I says, the sun has dawned again  
From top of Norway to the coast of Spain.  
What, gettin' out? You find the nearest wall  
And keep on holding fast to that and crawl.  
You'll be in time to hear the church bells ring  
On Sunday. Save yer paper and yer string,  
And don't forget the black-out when yer home!"  
Think what you'd feel like if you was in Rome."  
So the conductor with his poppy red—  
Wrapped in unfathomable smoke-clouds—said,  
And celebrated with such words and more  
The brightest foggiest day of all the war.

EVOE.

## Hobbies

**I**T has occurred to me that no survey of human nature would be complete without some mention of what are known as hobbies; if only because human nature, when asked if it has a hobby, reacts so strongly either way that hobbies must mean an awful lot to human nature. Scientists have estimated that probably everyone either has a hobby

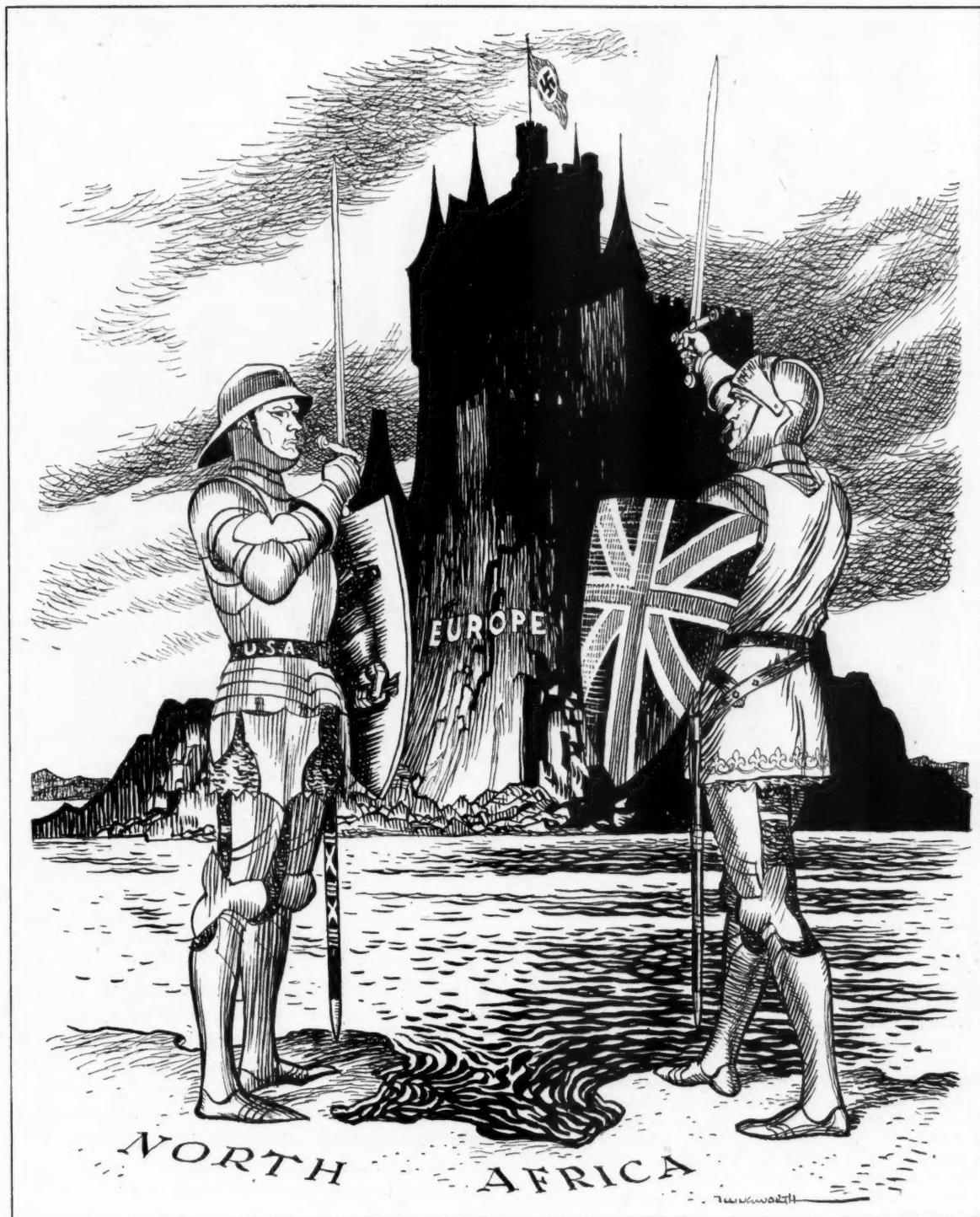
or hasn't, and that the ones who haven't have really, just as much as the others. So, I mean, there you are.

What, broadly speaking, are hobbies? Well, broadly speaking, hobbies are stamp-collecting. This may sound a bit arbitrary, but I don't think anyone will deny that to hear the word "hobby" is to get a sudden image of the sort of album which will never stay open, with thick white pages, some of them dotted with little coloured squares of paper. Some psychologists say that the identification of such an image with such a word is the effect of stamp-collecting in very early, sometimes, pre-conscious, life; other psychologists hold that it is the cause of stamp-collecting; that the identification is innate (or, as they put it, is there nagging at us) and that we are driven by some universal force to bring it about. Little else is known about stamp-collecting, except by stamp-collectors, so I shall go on now to birds' eggs. We all, I think, know quite a lot about this. To collect a bird's egg you must make a hole each end of it, blow the actual egg out and put the egg-shell on cotton-wool in a drawer. There are a lot of different birds in the world, and so there are a lot of different eggs, and the idea is to get as many as possible, because the more eggs there are on cotton-wool in a drawer the less likely other people are to want the drawer. People who collect birds' eggs properly, in special little cabinets, are known to be bird-lovers, though it is not always easy to see why. People who do not collect birds' eggs already are never likely to now, and people who do already are likely to go on. I think this finishes birds' eggs.

Now for carpentry. Carpentry is radically different from stamp-collecting and birds'-egg collecting because practically the whole point of these hobbies is, naturally enough, to *collect*, whereas practically the whole point of carpentry—in which I include fretwork—is, equally naturally, to *dispose of*. It is the unconscious realization of this which leads carpenters to make book-ends for people who read books, and fretworkers to make pipe-racks for people who smoke pipes. On the whole the relation between carpenters and non-carpenters and fretworkers and non-fretworkers is pretty good. Non-carpenters, who are always having to get bent nails out of pieces of wood or hammer bent nails in, would not be without carpenters for anything, and non-fretworkers, who are always a bit smug, would not be without fretworkers.

Next we come to railway trains. I don't mean toy ones, which are not so much a hobby as a question of luck in early life and of eccentricity and floor-space later on, but real railway trains, the sort you get in railway stations. We have all met people who admit that all they care about in the world is the number-plate on a railway-engine, and we have all of us accepted that there are such people in the world, and that they are happier, instead of less happy, at a really big railway junction than anywhere else, but that otherwise they are just like anyone else. People who play the banjo, on the other hand, are not like anyone else. For one thing people who play the banjo have a banjo, which makes them different to begin with, and people who do not play a banjo cannot talk to people who do play a banjo without finding this out almost at once, so that for the rest of their acquaintance, even if it is never mentioned again, those people who do not play a banjo realize that they are talking to someone who can play a banjo, and those people who do play a banjo realize that they are talking to someone who cannot. In a milder way the same gulf exists between those who have and those who have not read, say, the *Faerie Queene*, with the difference that reading is sometimes education and that anyone who has read it may have been made to.

It has probably been said that you can tell people's hobbies



RINGING THE OGRE'S KEEP



"... ONE household, ONE fire at a time—THAT'S what they said . . ."

by knowing what sort of people they are. It is just as interesting, and much easier, to tell what sort of people they are by knowing their hobbies. Thus, people who collect stamps are, as I have suggested, stamp-collectors. People who know trees by their bark in winter are a dreadful bore, and people who put used matches back in match-boxes are an awful nuisance. People who pick up old brass in old brass shops or old china in old china shops command a grudging respect from people who do not. People who cannot go for a walk without picking up conkers command no respect whatever; they are merely obeying a blind instinct which tells them that a long time ago they were taught to make little arm-chairs from conkers by sticking pins in and winding cotton round the pins. It is this blind but universal instinct which has led psychologists to assert that the conker complex in humanity may be identified with the hobby complex, and by working this out they have reached the conclusion that the hobby complex represents human nature's refusal to let well alone.

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.

### *If Only . . .*

I KNOW I could write music so entrancing,  
the nightingales would faint from off the trees,  
I'd set the young girls singing, shouting, dancing,  
I'd make the old men hum like bumble-bees.

Oh, lovely, lovely tunes! Some sweet, some gay,  
with violins soaring lark-high to the moon,  
and some for brassy bands on holiday,  
and some to make the jitterbugsters swoon.

I'd bring a song of comfort to the lonely,  
I'd make the quietly-beating heart go boom,  
I could be Brahms or Beethoven if only  
the piano wasn't in the other room.

V. G.

## The Minutes Pass.

THE blow has fallen: a Minute Sheet has reached me headed, "Status of Ldg. Wren Pickles." It has been referred to G.G.D., L.P.N.S., O.O.P., and "F" (for remarks) and after lying for a week at the bottom of our office basket it has now reached me.

The policy of our office with regard to Minute Sheets is one of decentralization. Commander Lobe, our chief, looks at them first, then crosses out his own name and puts in ours instead. There follows a period when the document is slipped about surreptitiously from basket to basket in case somebody else would care to deal with it. Once it has returned three times you know pretty well that you must do something about it: in this case, it is my rule to cross out my own name (in pencil) and write "Ldg. Wren Pickles, for action," and she of course says, "Pippin, old girl, this is yours"—and throws it across the desk to her assistant.

The system has worked very well. But in the present instance I can hardly ask Ldg. Wren Pickles to define her own status, and I myself find a great deal of difficulty in putting it into words.

I inherited Ldg. Wren Pickles when I took over this side of the department. I found that she and her assistant worked in an old wine-cellar, and I obtained for her, at the cost of twenty cigarettes offered in the right direction, a brand-new office, a telephone, a packet of wire paper-fasteners, a pot of glue, and a combination safe which we can none of us open.

Ldg. Wren Pickles has not stopped here. She has stuck on the wall a water-colour of "Deal, from the cliffs," several pictures of Micky Mouse, and a mirror, procured by a marine, which corresponds fairly closely with the one missing from the Officers' Cloakroom. Each morning, moreover, an apple is left on her desk by her admirer, an able seaman, who also writes a note:

"An apple for the teacher—Bing."

Sometimes too he leaves poetry as well as the apple. For instance:

"I'm wishing for a White Christmas  
Wishing it with all my HEART."

Ldg. Wren Pickles, it will be seen, is imbued with a progressive spirit, and if I have any criticism to make it is on the subject of a tendency to discursiveness.

Each morning I pay a routine call

with such queries as "Ref. G508962. What the blazes is this?" and she replies, "Pippin, old horse, you'll find that in P267 stroke B. It's in the thing."

All this is strictly to the point, but the interval when Pippin is failing to find it in the thing, deciding it must be in the other thing, and finally discovering it in a drawer right under her very nose, is filled with an account of what Ldg. Wren Pickles has been doing since I saw her last.

Last Tuesday, for instance, she:

- (a) Had a gorge tea, sir, and followed it up with a gorge supper.
- (b) Made 6 lbs. damson jam.
- (c) Saw an absolutely whizzbang film.

I then hear about her brother Norman, who is engaged, and about her other boy-friends, additional to Bing, among whom the Faithful Swine is always prominent and who, but for the fact that he is serving in a destroyer in the Far East, would carry my money. Ldg. Wren Pickles then touches on the office and any small improvements that may have been carried out. These may consist of anything from a new typewriter to Pippin's writing "How the blazes do ships get in here?" all over the map of the Caspian Sea.

Inevitably, also, we come to the safe and the problem of how to open it. Ldg. Wren Pickles tends to be defeatist and thinks that surely someone in the dockyard must know the combination, despite the fact that we have proved no one there even knows about the safe, let alone how to open it. My own procedure is to set the lock to 50 (or 80, because you can only just see the difference), turn five times forward, two back, listen for a click, shake the handle and swear softly. Ldg. Wren Pickles then gets excited and tries a number usually connected with her birthday or the date Pippin passed her typewriting test. She ends by being unable to extract the key, which somehow gets locked in, and regards this as a distinct advance, because it does show that *something* is working, at any rate.

By this time, of course, Pippin has returned and is listening spellbound, and the conversation is further interrupted when Ldg. Wren Pickles says: "Remind me to tell you something afterwards, Pippin, old bean."

In trying to think what this can possibly be I forget all about the G508962 and go away without any information at all, which means another visit later with approximately the same result.

I do not imply, however, that Ldg. Wren Pickles is not a highly efficient cog in the wheel. The trouble is that, just as Wrens in uniform are not permitted to wear diamonds or sport handbags, so Ldg. Wren Pickles is strictly not supposed to be doing this job at all. It is all bound up in being mobile or immobile, or a question of category, due to clerical error. The question *might* be solved by making her a petty officer, but the hat doesn't suit her. She has tried, and looks awful.

The whole situation is, in fact, very difficult, and it would be the greatest tragedy if Ldg. Wren Pickles were taken away from us. Nevertheless there is the Minute Sheet in front of me. G.G.D. has written, "Isn't this M.H.P.'s pigeon?" L.P.N.S. has contributed, "Concur," and O.O.P., "I know nothing whatsoever of this matter."

Another three weeks and someone will be taking action.

Small wonder that I have had a sleepless night. Who, in future, is going to deal with F/G/2332Bs? I don't mind putting my name to things, but who is to make up the chits for me to sign? The whole department will collapse. There will be no one to ring up J. Snoad—the man who gets us out of our difficulties when we are really up against it—and say coyly: "Hullo, Mr. Snoad, this is piece of cake speaking."

It is altogether a ticklish problem, but as I write I feel I have the answer. At one time I should have faced the facts: nowadays, however, I am wiser. I know that two Minute Sheets on the same subject have double the inertia-value of one. Accordingly I shall start a new Minute Sheet headed, "Ldg. Wren Pickles, Status Of."

On the first I shall merely write, "Is there not another paper on this subject?" and send it to "F" (for remarks).

## IN A GOOD CAUSE

FOR some years Mr. Punch has drawn the attention of his readers to Miss BEATRIX POTTER'S "Peter Rabbit" Christmas Cards, profits from the sale of which go to endow the Children's Heart Home at West Wickham. This year there can be no cards, but the need for beds continues, and donations to the Invalid Children's Aid Association will be gratefully received by the Hon. ANGELA BARING, Hon. Secretary, Itchen Stoke Manor, Alresford, Hants.

## Why Not Steal My Bicycle?

JONES has a 2-litre Barclay, a car of great power and speed with a slim silver lady on the front of the bonnet and two exhaust-pipes so huge that they cannot be contained within the frame-work of the machine but have to be carried lashed to the outside like gigantic sewers. Jones used to wear a check cap when he drove this affair, and often there was a slim lady inside the car as well.

But just at the moment Jones isn't driving the Barclay. Her sump has been drained, her wheels are hanging on nails, her mascot is wrapped in brown paper, and even Jones's cap has been put aside to wait for happier days. One doesn't, as Jones says, wear a check cap in a bus.

There was a time when I envied Jones very much indeed. It seemed to me that if I had a car like his the world would lie at my feet. "What about running down to the Blue Angel for a bit of dinner?" I should say, and in we should jump, she with a wisp of whatever-it-is round her neat golden head and I with my cap—not quite such a definite check as Jones's perhaps, but still with a certain air about it—I with my cap at a jaunty angle and a Hawks Club scarf thrown carelessly round my neck.

Now Jones envies me. When I flash past him as he trudges to the bus-stop he turns his head aside and swings his umbrella in an off-hand way, but I know that his thoughts are bitter and his heart heavy within him.

My bicycle is not as fast as a 2-litre Barclay and it seats one only, but I am too old now to care about that. Its wheels are not hung up on nails, nor has the Government, so far as I know, any designs on its tyres. Nobody tells me to keep below five miles an hour in order to save rubber. I am not assaulted by posters nor, thank heaven, by Two-Minute Talks after the eight o'clock news.

My bicycle is streamlined. The man who sold it to me, knowing well how any obstructions or excrescences on the frame set up air-eddies and reduce velocity, took care to see that no bells, lamps, saddle-bags, carriers, back-steps or other fal-lals should mar its flowing lines.

I am grateful for this, though I must say I should have liked a step. Not to give anyone a lift—for, as I say, my romantic days are over—but because to mount a machine from the rear, by treading firmly on the step and then, as it were, flowing forward on to the saddle has a dignity about it that is sadly lacking in the normal method of approach.



My old Housemaster, I remember, used to get on his bicycle from behind. I do not believe we should have thought so much of him if he had made a wide semicircular sweep in the air with his right leg every time he started off.

There is, for some reason, a pump on my bicycle, and this is a source of constant vexation to me. My friends tell me that it will be stolen if I leave it on, yet I cannot imagine where one should keep a bicycle-pump if not on the bicycle. They also assure me that the cycle itself will be stolen if I don't get a padlock for it, and this is something of a comfort, for if the whole machine is to go the pump may as well go with it. There is no more pitiable creature than a man who owns a pump but no bicycle. So if anyone wants to steal my bicycle please don't let him hesitate to take the pump as well. "The prisoner asked that the theft of a pump should be taken into consideration at the same time." That sort of request always impresses a magistrate in the man's favour.

The wheels of my bicycle are well equipped with spokes, which is a source of continual satisfaction to me. Looking at it as it leans against the wall with one pedal slightly raised and the front wheel inclining gracefully outwards, I am struck by the thought that but for the spokes the hub would fall out and then there would be nothing to attach the front fork to. One might say that it is the spokes to which the whole success of the enterprise is in no small measure due. They are slender things and, taken individually, of no great strength. A man might take one out and twist it into strange shapes with his bare hands. (A man has, in fact, I now see, taken one out from the back wheel and omitted to replace it.) But together, with all their energies strained towards the same central nub or focus, they present a massive unyielding resistance to whatever forces may be brought to bear upon them.

There is a lesson here, I think, for the United Nations.

I shall not say much about the saddle of my bicycle, except that it is set rather far from the pedals for a man of my stature, so that I am forced to propel myself by the extremities of my toes. My friends, who have throughout been extraordinarily kind and solicitous in their attentions since I bought my bicycle, have pointed out to me that there is an arrangement underneath the saddle by which it can be raised or lowered at will, but I am not mechanically-minded, and in all my dealings with machinery have found it best not to tamper with the manufacturer's product. The fact is I have no clips and I maintain that a high saddle helps to keep one's trouser-legs clear of what we call the sprocket and chain.

I have said nothing as yet about my brakes, with which the machine is fully supplied. The front brake has a nice free action. The handle or lever can, in fact, be pulled up to a position level with the bars without incident of any kind, but if raised half an inch higher the action is so sharp and sudden as to resemble a hiccup. The front of the bicycle stops dead and the back part pivots about it through an angle of some ninety degrees. This is a great convenience, for the rider, on remounting, finds himself ready to start off in a different direction, which was presumably his object in applying the brake. (I should explain that one does not ride round corners on my bicycle, owing to the fact that the handlebars strike the knees. I am not sure whether the high saddle has anything to do with this.) The back brake is on all the time, so there is no occasion to bother with it.

If I were to sell my bicycle for half what it cost me (which I shall not do because of the obvious envy of the man Jones) it would still be pretty expensive. But I am open to a reasonable offer for the pump—unless of course you prefer to steal it.

H. F. E.

## Prelude and Performance

### IV—The Maid

**H**ULLO, here you are. My dear, I should have warned you that the despicable Agnes has developed a bronchial mother or something, and has gone off to see her this afternoon. She says she'll be back to wash-up dinner, but I have a feeling she'll probably rat."

"But it doesn't matter a bit. I think it's rather fun on our own."

"When you see Agnes you'll think so even more. The interminable stories I have to listen to about her awful family every day—my dear, it's a real penance, I can tell you."

"Is she good otherwise?"

"Hopeless. Late for everything, uneatable food and no method. John says she's batty, but personally I think it's just cussedness. Still, I suppose it's better than having nobody."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Good evening, Agnes. How awfully good of you to come back as soon as this. Do tell me, how is your mother?"

"Oh, she's ever so poorly to-night, Madam. She can't seem to get her breath, and everything she eats turns in her stomach, she says."

"Oh, I am sorry. You must tell me all about it to-morrow. I'm longing to hear more, but I've got Mrs. Rate dining here, so I must get back to her now. The dinner was delicious—thank you most awfully for leaving everything so beautifully. . . . I must fly now."

"What time breakfast in the morning, Madam?"

"Let's have it nice and late. I expect you are tired after your worrying day—will 9.30 be all right for you?"

### V—The Schoolmaster

"Gunning—you're not attending."

"Oh, yes, sir, please sir, I am, sir."

"What was my last question to the class?"

"Er—it was—you said, . . . I'm afraid I'm not quite sure, sir."

"Exactly. 'Not quite sure.' Is there anything in the world about which Gunning is 'quite sure'? Well, I am tolerably certain of one thing. If this was an imbecility class Wilfrid Gunning would be permanently at the top. Of all the idle, stupid, good-for-nothing boys it has ever been my misfortune to teach—at your age you should be an example to the school;



*"Don't you sometimes just yearn for a bit of honest, obvious slapstick?"*

instead of which you are a disgrace. It is just the same on the playing-fields. You show no application, you won't use your brains. Brains!—I don't know why I employ that word at all. I'm beginning to think you haven't got a brain—that you never had a brain. . . ."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Ah, Mr. Gunning, good afternoon. Come down to see Wilfrid? Good afternoon, Mrs. Gunning."

"I hope the youngster has been behaving himself all right, Mr. Hooper?"

"Oh, rather, yes. He's doing splendidly. Capital little fellow. A good influence in the school."

"How's his work coming along?"

"Oh, coming along nicely. Not always at the top of the class, you know, but we can't expect that all the time. He tries hard and that's the main thing."

"I'm so glad. And his games?"

"Shaping well—and keen as mustard. Ah, here he is . . . Well, Wilfrid, I've just been telling your parents that you're going to lick Aston House off the field this afternoon, what? . . . That's the spirit!" M. D.

○ ○

"WANTED—Gent's Suit. 5 ft. 10 in. broad."—Advt. in "Cambridge Daily News." As broad as it's long.

*Churchill*

### *War Song of the Army Council*

HARK, how the typists rattle—  
Their nimble fingers fly,  
As forth into the battle  
We fling each A.C.I.\*

Our full and flowing phrases  
(Who tries, may understand)  
Reach brigadiers at bases  
And sentries in the sand.

Above the sounds of slaughter  
Men hear our battle-cry,  
As ruthless, without quarter,  
We ask for reasons why.

By constant inquisition,  
However much it riles,  
We keep our proud tradition  
And fill a thousand files.

Hark, how the typists rattle;  
Hear our triumphant shout,  
As bravely into battle  
Each envelope goes out!

\* Army Council Instruction

### *H. J. Talking*

ONE of my ambitions is to be thought well read, but this reputation depends not so much on the extent of your reading as on your position in life, a professor, for example, not being so thought unless he knows Czech, while a judge can get by on Jane Austen and *The Pickwick Papers*. On the whole, few expect a scientist to be more than just literate, though some require Dorothy Sayers and/or Marx. My own reading has suffered from two maiden ladies who live opposite us, and they are very educated ladies indeed and are always lending books at me, and if I refuse them their feelings are hurt which is a very dreadful thing to happen as they lean against the wallpaper and weep, our drawing-room already peeling badly from this cause. As they are engaged on a history of English literature before Chaucer, their selections are not what I would choose for myself, being mainly origins, and it is indeed rare to be lent a book by them written by a man who has actually learnt to write that kind of book. At the moment I am edging my way through a very long poem describing the duties of a swineherd.

My father was a man of such devouring curiosity that whenever he got a book he would look down the hole at the back and see words there and take the binding off to see what they were, and by the time he had stuck the binding on again, which he always did, having been taught a sharp lesson over leaving a clock unreconstructed at school, he considered it was time to move on to a fresh book. He had a book-plate printed, and this caused him much trouble, as he wanted it to be distinctive, but not so distinctive that it ceased to look like one at all. Finally he decided that it should be classical in design, and what it showed was Helen of Troy being played zither to by Cicero. He chose this theme because (1) he thought it unlikely anybody else would choose it and (2) the artist had mentioned that he wanted more practice in drawing zithers, and my father was always considerate to those who worked for him. Underneath this design there was a scroll which said "This book is now the property of Luminosity Jenkins"; and how he got christened this was that while his parents were debating what he was to be called they suddenly remembered that nobody they knew was so named, and therefore to avoid confusion they fixed the name on him.

When I get a chance history is what I like to read, but as one's mind ranges through the past it is apt to bump up against trade, and this is very disconcerting, because just after you have learnt that the ordinary man spent his life suffering oppression, building cathedrals, using spoons with beautiful shapes and feeling integrated, there is a little bit put in which tells you that he also bought and sold things, this being well known to have a lowering effect on all who practise it. Indeed, however far you go back you find this trading going on, and where it happened most was across the passes of the Alps, and it is odd that it should have happened so near the Renaissance without spoiling it. At different times trade seems to have been in different things, first pots and brooches, then wool and spices, then railway engines and cheap tin trays. It has often struck me how odd the history of the present day will be for future readers, because the hallmark of history is that we know only half of it and the fun comes in guessing the other half; so much is known about the present day that it seems doubtful if it will ever be made into history at all, though perhaps historians will make their names by guessing what was said over the telephone.

One way in which history differs from science is that



*"The I-N-F-A-N-T said something quite E-X-T-E-M-P-O-R-E  
this morning."*

there are more causes. If in chemistry you find that iodine has turned blue you know it is because someone has slipped some starch into it, but the Rise of Towns was due to sheep, capitalism, better ships, peace, war, being matey, and almost anything else that you can think of. In this way the historian has far more scope than a scientist, and in moments of discouragement—when we get an explosion in a laboratory, for example—an historian is what I sometimes decide to become, the only thing deterring me being the necessity for drawing maps, this always having caused me much difficulty. I once produced a map intended to show things that had happened in the Mediterranean, but unrecognizable was what it was owing to my tracing half of it and having to go away and then tracing the other half without having noticed that the paper had fallen out and been replaced another way round. It gained some notoriety as on publication I labelled it "The World According to the Visigoths," thus explaining away the divergencies from the

### FROM ISOLATED POSTS

FROM a letter received: "I write to express the great gratitude of the men and of ourselves. It has been such a pleasure to take round these woollies and see the delight of the men and hear the next day that they'd been really warm the night before. These men have a very hard time and have to stand-to in all weathers with very little protection. The gifts provided by your Fund have made a very real difference to them." Please join in the service by sending your contribution. Donations will be gratefully received and acknowledged by Mr. Punch at PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouvierie St., London, E.C.4.

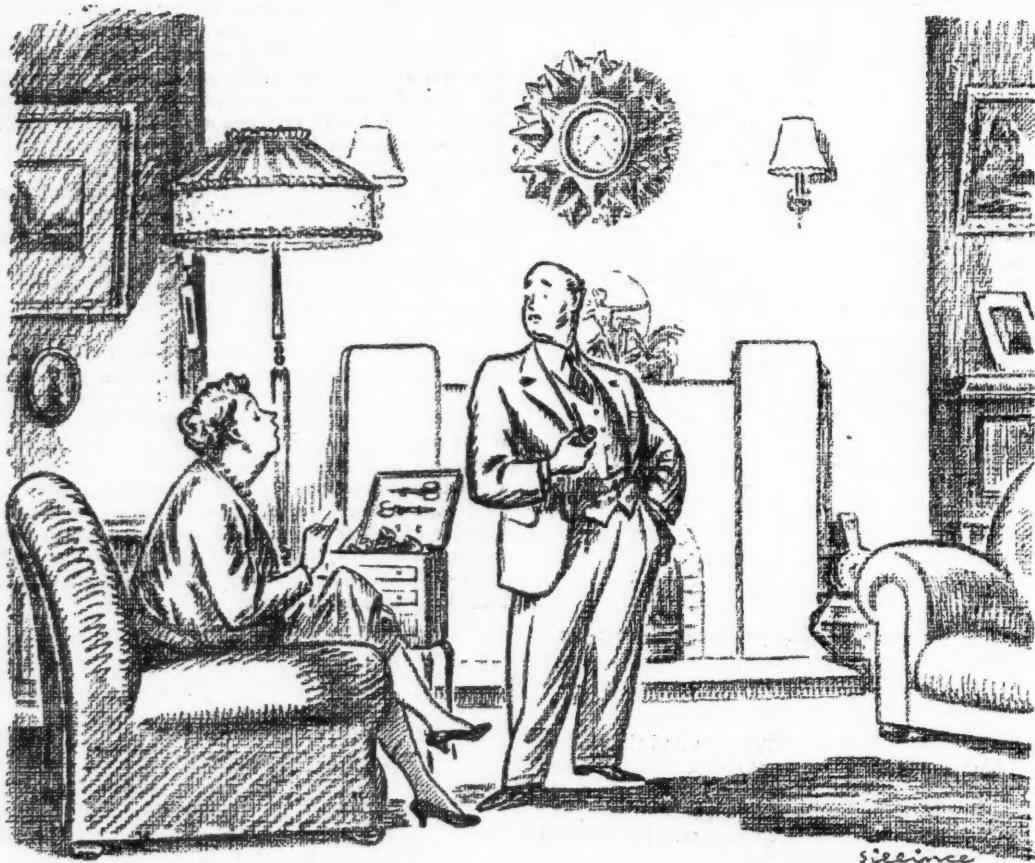
usual shape. One kind of history on which I might make my mark if I had time is reviewing history books by other writers. For this you need a good stout bibliography, and you copy out the names of articles the writer has not used. If it is a work on early times you can always say something has been dug up which completely disproves the author's thesis. If he hasn't one you say he ought to have, and in any case you end by saying "The subject still awaits its historian."

I had always hoped that my son Junissimus could be turned into a notable scholar, and before we had to deal with his education at home he was for a time a member of one of the very ripest schools to be found, but disparaging were what his reports were apt to be—for example: Attendance, More frequent than hoped for; Literature, Rather too advanced for his age; History, Scandalous; French, Very low. This school specialized in traditions, of which the prospectus said they had more than any other school in the country. The Sixth Form did not wear caps but deer-stalkers; the First Fifteen left their shoe-laces untied; after a boy was flogged the headmaster gave him a glass of port for which a guinea was charged on the bill; sons of peers wore dinner-jackets in class; the head porter, always known as Master Simnel, levied a toll of five per cent. on the salaries of the teaching staff and presented a haunch of venison to the Archbishop of Canterbury on Lady Day. Indeed, although founded only in 1933, replete with manners and customs is what it was.



### DOGGERELS OF WAR—I

*Cook all you can at once, and you'll  
Help to save the country's fuel.*



S. C. E.

*"You know, dear, if I were to cut off your turn-ups and sleeve-buttons and sew up a few pockets I could make it look just like one of the fashionable Utility suits."*

### *The Watchmen*

WHAT night-watching mind or eye  
Will the first see Liberty  
When to Europe, with her chain  
Broken, she comes home again  
Underneath a darkened sky  
And all along a blackened plain,  
Where the cannon will remain  
Mouldering by mouldered rye,  
Rusting, rusting in the rain  
And creaking with the breeze's sigh?  
Who shall see her first and know  
She is yet as long ago?  
Will it be in fields of France  
One will see her countenance,  
By sunny slopes where vineyards grow?  
Or will she meet a wondering glance  
From some worker fallen low  
Where a city met mischance?  
Or will dreamer in a trance  
See her eyes through darkness glow

In Denmark, or the furthest coast  
Of Norway; or, where suffer most  
The people from a tyrant's hate,  
In Poland? What down-trodden state  
Will first arise? What happy host  
Will offer her the first elate  
Wild greetings? What long-wandering ghost,  
Brooding on some city's fate,  
Will know that vengeance comes, though late,  
And see the end of Hitler's boast?  
We know not; only that with sighs  
Those watching the immensities  
Of morning and, when stars are bright,  
Waiting, waiting for the sight  
Of Liberty, will recognize  
Her first step, however light,  
And by the beauty of her eyes  
Will know her, walking through the night.  
And Europe will arise to fight  
And crown her above tyrannies. ANON.



THE END OF A TEA-PARTY

## Impressions of Parliament

### *Business Done*

**Tuesday, November 10th.**—Both Houses are Prorogued.

**Wednesday, November 11th.**—House of Lords: Their Majesties Open a New Session.

House of Commons: Mr. Churchill Does a Tale Unfold.

**Thursday, November 12th.**—Both Houses: The Debate Continues.

**Tuesday, November 10th.**—Black Rod, Air Chief Marshal Sir WILLIAM MITCHELL, called on the faithful Commons to-day, was received with the traditional rudeness, had the door slammed in his face, and (with rather more than traditional suavity) conducted Mr. Speaker and his merry men to the House of Peers to hear a Royal speech proroguing Parliament.

Lord SIMON read it with his usual elocutionary skill. And that ended an historic session.

**Wednesday, November 11th.**—Major EDWARD FELLOWS, silent recorder (as Clerk at the Table) of the doings of the House of Commons, but also Commander of the Parliamentary Home Guard, made to-day the first speech of the new session, when, once more, the two Houses assembled together, this time to hear the eighth session opened by the KING.

The Major's speech was short and admirably to the point. It was a speech of text-book perfection, saying what it wanted to say clearly and concisely, without unnecessary frills. As heard distinctly by your scribe, amidst the deferential hush that heralds the coming of the Sovereign to Parliament, it was in these memorable words:

*"Gahd! . . . Stannat—Izz!"*

The gallant Major was not breaching the rules by speaking in a foreign language, but was merely intimating to a very smart guard of his military unit that they might stand-at-ease for the time being. His speech crashed and echoed through the history-laden hall.

The KING, in the Service-dress of an Admiral of the Fleet, and the QUEEN in black and pearls, sat silent a moment on the gilded thrones until the Commons stood before them.

Then, in his steady, clear, young

voice, he read the longish speech that promised hard work and blood and toil and tears. But, in the end, victory.

In a few moments the royal ceremony was over. Outside, the stentorian voice of the erstwhile silent recorder rang out again:

*"Gahd! . . . Sssh'n!"*

A minute more, and Their Majesties were gone. The Commons returned to their own House, the Lords stayed in theirs. In the secrecy with which war shrouds these picturesque survivals, another session had been born.

Every year, when the KING has made his speech, each House politely thanks him in a Loyal Address, and

full of gentle humour, with shy little glimpses of more serious feeling peeping out here and there. Recalling that, as a young barrister, he had been advised to say whatever he had to say, however absurd, in a loud clear voice, he lived up to that advice—but what he had to say was certainly not absurd.

More will be heard of Major THORNEYCROFT, proprietor of the most engagingly bashful smile, and one of the most musical voices, in the present Parliament.

Then, to a roar of cheers, Mr. CHURCHILL went to the Table to tell the House about the war. He gently chaffed his critics for their impatience when there seemed to be "nothing doing," and pointed out that things were not always what they seemed.

For instance, out in the Egyptian desert there was the elaborate encampment of an armoured division for all to see—even the Germans. They, sure enough, saw it. And they visited and inspected it regularly every day. But, one night, it moved on . . . but was still there! This Alice-in-Wonderland effect was achieved by the simple expedient of creating a dummy armoured division (a simulacrum, he called it) which stayed put until the real thing was in action far away.

With a twinkle the PREMIER claimed that there was no harm in deceiving—the enemy. He would never act on impulse, or in response to public clamour. Even, said he, if such reluctance were taken for apathy and inertia. *He* needed no prodding—was, in fact, a prodder himself.

Speaking of the secret plans that had brought so rich a prize in Egypt and in French North Africa, he mentioned that the British and United States officers who had framed them had worked like a "band of brothers." This was all the more remarkable because they were certainly not—like those soldiers of HENRY V who first earned that title—few.

Delighted laughter swept through the Chamber when Mr. CHURCHILL read, verbatim, the crisp directive he had given to General ALEXANDER, G.O.C. Egypt. "You will seek out and destroy Rommel's army, supplies and reserves." "I expect," said the PREMIER, drily, "the General will be sending back for further instructions!"



THE BATTLE OF EGYPT

As depicted in the Egyptian Hall of the Mansion House.

even the war cannot shake this practice. In the Lords, Lord BEATTY, looking more than ever like his famous father, and Lord WIMBORNE, perched by tradition among the Tories, for all his family traditions as a Liberal, moved and seconded the Address with brilliant little speeches.

In the Commons, bearded Mr. A. G. WALKDEN, railway clerks' leader, moved that House's Address, largely in a sort of one-man secret session. The parts of the speech that could be heard were clever and good-humoured. Some of it made the PRIME MINISTER, sitting a yard away, blush.

Field-Marshal SMUTS, in the gallery, and most of the other people in the crammed House, soon gave up the attempt to hear Mr. WALKDEN, but listened with delight to as charming a seconding speech as has been enjoyed for many a year. This came from Major THORNEYCROFT, and was



There was a special warmth in the cheer which greeted the announcement that one of the triumphant Generals in Egypt was Major-General Ivon HUGHES, in peace, Deputy-Serjeant-at-Arms of the House, but now "imitating the action of the tiger."

Enemy casualties had been 59,000; ours 13,600. Grievous our losses, but far fewer than had been expected in so fierce a fight.

And Herr ADOLF HITLER ("quite uncivil sometimes") had described the designers and executants of these marvels of the military art as "military idiots and drunkards." Well, well, well!

There was praise for everybody—the Generals, the Admirals, the Air Marshals, their men. Even a good word for the Press.

Members were so carried away that they cheered this rare medal pinned on the breast of the Fourth Estate, for "extreme discretion," and general helpfulness and patriotism.

What next? Well, Italy would be able to make a closer study of the trials and tribulations of war, for we were now firmly ensconced in North Africa, and would take full advantage of that fact. HITLER was even then

marching into what remained of France, in defiance of the Armistice which had been kept with such pitiful and perverted fidelity by the Vichy Government.

And for us? For us . . . Yes, blood, and toil, and tears, and sweat—and victory. *If we did not relax.*

There it was. The great story had been told. The House drifted off with the bitter-sweet feeling of the small boy who, breathlessly reading his favourite serial thriller, has reached the taunting, teasing words: "To be continued in our next."

*Thursday, November 12th.*—A distinctly Boxing Day atmosphere descended on the Commons to-day. The House was half empty. Members made their speeches listlessly. And went home eagerly.

There is more excitement to come, and the rule of a fast before a feast is a good one.

• •

#### Things that Might have been Expressed Differently

"Mr. —, solicitor, said at Cardiff to-day: 'I am convinced that there is such a thing as phycic phenomena.'" *Evening Standard.*

#### Rooks in Convoy

**I**N close convoy zooming rooks  
Beat on slow wings,  
Hang motionless, suspended,  
Dangling like hooks  
On invisible strings.  
Before a deep plunge  
They hover, testing the giant gale's  
Inconstant breath;  
While the wind-whipped rain  
Flies fast about them,  
Roughly snatches insistent caws  
Like blown spray from a liner's bows.  
They veer and tack,  
Taking the slack  
With the rough,  
Plough the viewless air  
As they fall and dip  
Into the rolling trough.  
Together they group,  
Deftly avoid collision  
By the black precision  
Of feathered tails.

They push on grimly, determined,  
Towards the distant goal—far realm  
Of storm-tossed fancy,  
Until, gaunt black anchors, they slip  
Neatly down; Grip  
Iron claws into a heaving elm.

### At the Play

**"BEST BIB AND TUCKER"** (PALLADIUM)  
**"AREN'T MEN BEASTS!"** (GARRICK)

It is just possible that you may prefer other things in *Best Bib and Tucker* before Mr. TOMMY TRINDER, its impish master of ceremonies. Mr. TRINDER won't mind if you do: there is tolerance as well as assurance in his happy grin. You may be a mere aesthete and prefer the spectacle in Mr. GEORGE BLACK's new show—the dancing scenes so cleverly arranged by Mr. ROBERT NESBITT; the breath-takingly pretty gradations between white and deep blue in a new version of GERSHWIN's ineludible *Rhapsody*. You may like best of all the one-third spoken, one-third danced, one-third mimed version of INGOLDSBY's *Jackdaw of Rheims* where the colour-notes are white and cardinal red. This was lovely in 1924 when BASIL MACDONALD HASTINGS and HERMAN FINCK put their heads together to devise it for a revue called *Brighter London*. The acknowledgement is justly made in the programme, and the revival makes brighter the London of to-day. A new and charming little dancer, Miss MARGARET ROSEBY, is the jackdaw, cursed and then uncursed.

You may even be heterodox and prefer one of the other comedians with whom Mr. TRINDER so unselfishly surrounds himself. It is understandable that you may lose your heart utterly to the pathetic charm of the younger of the two CAIROLI BROTHERS. He is small, unassured, ill-dressed, and wears a bowler which is one degree in seediness above that of the greatest living English-speaking clown. He hovers among his many musical instruments with the grotesque virtuosity of the greatest of all French clowns. Can any human comedian at once give us reminders of CHAPLIN and GROCK, and yet retain his own quiddity since he is an imitation of neither? The answer is that this younger CAIROLI can. Pale as a daisy, yet with a nose of violent crimson, he is the personification of wistful mischief—intensely French and yet any

whimsical little boy of any nation, irresponsible and yet with a curious stab of sadness even in his laughter at the fulfilment of his own musical exploits.

Yet another comedian in the cast, Mr. NAT JACKLEY, has much too little to say, and says most of it with a pair of legs that behave as crazily as would a pair of scissors fashioned out of something more flexible than india-rubber. This Mr. JACKLEY makes us laugh by the sheer and insistent fooling of these many varieties of walk

he amusingly caricatures allurements which are apparently being worked upon Christopher Columbus himself. In the course of a production-number of many scenes illustrating the music of America between such "poles apart" as STEPHEN FOSTER and COLE PORTER, it is Mr. TRINDER who delivers a pair of ditties of the earliest ragtime period.

In "Six O'clock News" he is any harassed householder trying vainly to hear of world-events on the radio while his wife jabbers nineteen to her tea-time visitors' dozen. (This is a situation rather than a sketch, and could be shortened considerably. On the first night it seemed almost as long as "the News" itself.)

In a turn contributed by the jugglers, BAKER, DOVE and ALLEN, he re-emerges in the guise of a juggler's apprentice and quite miraculously escapes injury from the flying clubs. The legion of Trinderites has probably prevailed upon him by this time to keep out of this item, and not run the insufficiently rewarding risk. In the last item but one he is TRINDER pure and irresistible, singing a gay little song, telling some of his tales, and always grinning happily. Mr. PRIESTLEY once wrote of CHAPLIN: "He spent his boyhood in the London streets, those crowded East End streets that are as full of tragedy, of rapid alternations of disaster and buffoonery, as an Elizabethan play." Mr. TRINDER has the same source, spirit and education.

The VERNON SYLVAINES farce revived at the Garrick

is the one in which Mr. HARE begins as a dentist, is compromised by a beautiful but mysterious client, and has to disguise himself first as his own sister and later as an East End tough in order to evade the police. It is also the one in which Mr. DRAYTON assumes no disguise at all though at one frantic moment he unmistakably resembles a lobster protesting at being boiled, and at another—groaning against a sofa-cushion at the outpourings of a small platitudinous police-officer—looks like the largest and most disdainful kind of dog. With something between a yawn and a sneer on his visage, he gazes as a mastiff would gaze upon a peke. A. D.



STARS AND STRIPES

he can assume. A penguin, a rabbit, a crab, an intoxicated gander—he patters, totters, and dawdles like all of these and like many things more. He makes us giggle deliriously, where Mr. CAIROLI makes us wonder between our laughs, and Mr. TRINDER makes us beam continuously.

Yes, it is to Mr. TRINDER that we must come back, if only because he is the one artist in this highly satisfactory show who does come back to us again and again. He caps and crowns a rather monotonous "Caribbean Rhapsody" with a stunning imitation of that "Brazilian bombshell," Miss CARMEN MIRANDA. He cannot approach that lady's rapidity of articulation, but



"All right, Blenkinsop, march Sir Charles in."

### Music in London

**W**E have recently had the good fortune to hear two fine symphonic works for voices and orchestra, of particular interest both individually and in contrast; for they represent two entirely opposite philosophic ideas, and both were written within the first decade of the present century. One—VAUGHN WILLIAMS' *Sea Symphony*—is the expression of the greatness of the spirit of man, and the other—MAHLER'S *Song of the Earth*—of the futility and pathos of man's transient existence. To add to the interest of these works, they were thrown into sharp relief by a concert of American music broadcast a few days earlier and purporting to express yet another aspect of the spirit of man—the aspirations of a great nation.

A *Sea Symphony* was given at the Albert Hall by the Royal Philharmonic Society and the Royal Choral Society in honour of the seventieth birthday of the composer, who conducted the performance. The soloists were ISOBEL BAILLIE and ROY HENDERSON, and the orchestra the London Philharmonic. This magnificent and stirring setting of poems by WALT WHITMAN has a

peculiar significance at the present time, for the poems tell of the sea that unites all men and all nations and symbolizes the soul of man that "matest Time, smilest content at Death, and fillest, swellest full the vastnesses of Space." At times the grandeur of WHITMAN'S mystic vision seems to rend the fabric of the music, and in the Second Movement it is as if the composer were shut out from the vision, but this does not in any way detract from the dignity and impressiveness of the work as a whole. The performance was a fine one and the choir, in spite of depleted numbers, rose well to the occasion.

One could not help comparing this symphony—the creation of a great American writer and a great English musician—with the American music broadcast from New York by TOSCANINI. The centre-piece of this concert was a symphonic poem called *Lincoln Rhapsody*, which, we were told, represented the vitality and restless spirit of America, but which seemed to us a dreary succession of orchestral clichés dating from the pre-Wall-Street-Crash period. The concert ended with

GERSHWIN'S *Rhapsody in Blue*; but it is impossible to believe that this expression of the disillusionment of the nineteen-twenties has anything whatever to do with the spirit of America.

*The Song of the Earth* was given by Musical Culture Limited (the London Philharmonic Orchestra in apotheosis) and Messrs. BOOSEY AND HAWKES. It is a setting by MAHLER (whose tone-painting richly earns him his name), for orchestra and tenor and contralto voices, of six ancient Chinese poems expressing the tragedy of human existence—Earth's Sorrow, Autumn Loneliness, Youth, Beauty, Spring, and Farewell. It is a masterpiece, a rainbow of shining sound, woven of strands as frail as a spider's web—a miracle of tone-spinning. That it is performed so seldom is due to the fact that though it is in the nature of chamber-music it demands a very large orchestra. It was given a very fine performance by the orchestra, Sir ADRIAN BOULT and the singers, Miss ASTRA DESMOND and Mr. PETER PEARS—a performance well worth the journey to Golders Green in a November black-out. D. C. B.



Frank Reynolds

"How would you describe the shape of the Pyramids, Charley?"

### Sea Slang

WE hear much about the merry slang of the R.A.F. We have also heard a little about the tough terse slang of the American citizen on land. Some of us, indeed, almost forget that anyone but Americans and airmen ever expressed himself in tough terse tickling fashion. I returned by chance the other day to Mr. Frank C. Bowen's *Sea Slang\** (A dictionary of the Old Timers' Expressions and Epithets). To drift through this little book is a refreshing reminder that seamen, both British and American, had a tough terse way with the English language long before

aeroplanes or gangsters were heard of. And any modern lad who thinks he has a rich equipment of idiom should look through the little book and think again.

As usual, one finds a number of old words which are now being trotted out and displayed as "the latest." ERK, for instance. This, I understand, is the short title of an aircraftman to-day. But here it is in Mr. Bowen's book—"ERK—A lower-deck rating"—Heaven knows why. Here, too, is "CARRY THE CAN (TAKE THE CAN BACK) (Navy)—To be reprimanded," which every tough suburban guy supposes he has got from Chicago. An official of the Ministry of Food was telling me lately that he had come

across a queer new word in the fish-trade. Here it is:

"BUMMAREE—An irregular speculative fish-dealer, now seldom heard—or found." (The book was published in 1935.)

And here is SCOOTCH (Spirits)—father, I presume, of HOOCH.

Few lads sucking their fags realize that they owe the expression to the sea—"FAG END—The end of a rope that has become unravelled." Or do they?

You have heard perhaps of two chaps PARTING BRASS-RAGS—Quarrelling. Did you know that came from "the bluejacket's habit of sharing brass cleaning-rags with his particular friend"? No.

There are, I am sorry to say, a great many words of Personal Abuse—or, shall one say, Classification. But then in those days it mattered even more than now for a man afloat to be good company and a good seaman. So we find:

BARBER'S CLEEK—A dainty well-groomed seaman who is poor at his job.

A BIRD—A troublesome seaman.

BLUE LIGHT—A sanctimonious seaman.

A CARD—A troublesome naval rating.

TO CHAW THE FAT—To argue.

FOWL—A troublesome seaman, otherwise a bird—also called an IRK (hence, perhaps, ERK?).

GALLEY GROWLERS—Idle malcontents.

GANNET—A greedy seaman.

GAW GAW—A useless seaman.

GAWPUS—An idle seaman.

A HARD HORSE—A tyrannical officer.

A JAW-ME-DOWN—A loud talker on shipboard.

JOSKIN—A green hand under sail.

KEDGER—A sea-corruption for cadger: "A man who is in everybody's mess but nobody's watch."

KING'S HARD BARGAIN—A useless naval rating.

KING'S BENCHER—The old naval name for a seaman who prefers holding forth in the galley to a job of work.

KYE—A rating who is mean with his money.

MESSMEN'S HORROR—A hungry man.

NIPCHEESE—The purser's steward.

A PYSOE—A close-fisted seaman.

A SCISSOR-GRINDER—An engineer-artificer in the Navy.

SHIPJACK—An old naval name for a dandified and generally useless officer.

SLACK IN STAYS—A lazy seaman.

SNARLEY YOW—A ship's grumbler in the old Navy.

ULLAGE—A useless hand in a man-o'-war.

Mr. Bowen (who deserves innumerable tots of thanks from us all) goes back a long way—to a time when

\*SAMPSON LOW

death, drunkenness and poverty were always about: and, to vary the monotony perhaps, the men had many names for them. A seaman could die in all sorts of ways—**CUT THE PAINTER**, **LOSE THE NUMBER OF HIS MESS**, **SLIP HIS WIND**, **UNREEVE HIS LIFE-LINE**, be **UNDER SAILING ORDERS**, go **UNDER HATCHES**, or **SLIP HIS CABLE**. He could be drunk with even more variety. He could **CARRY THREE RED LIGHTS** (*i.e.*, not under control), be **SHOT AWAY**, **SLEWED**, **TIN-HATTED**, **MOORED** in Sot's Bay (drunk and incapable), **IN THE WIND** (half-intoxicated), **THREE SHEETS IN THE WIND** (*Slightly* drunk, before the offensive stage is reached), or **THREE PARTS SEVEN EIGHTHS** (drunk). Note the nice gradations. And then tell me—for I do not know—why “Three Parts Seven Eighths”? Has it something to do with “one over the eight”? And what exactly is the significance of that?

Deserting, too, could be done in many ways. You could **LEVANT**, **GIVE LEG BAIL**, **RUN** (as you can now), **CUT A STICK**, **SKIN OUT**, **SLING YOUR HOOK**, or **UP KILLICK**, **WALK YOUR CHALKS**, or **WALK SPANISH**.

Sleeping was a **KIP**, or **TAKING A CAULK**, or **TAKING A STRETCH OF THE LAND**—all still in use, but all mysterious, at least to me. I never heard of **CATCHING THE BIRD** (taking a nap) before.

Here are words which might have been invented by Lewis Carroll—or the R.A.F. To **SNURGE** meant “to get out of doing some unpopular job.” **STOOMING** was “driving before a heavy gale, a term long obsolete.” **STUGGING** was “the pounding or rolling motion of a stranded ship.” To **SWILKER** was “to splash about in the water.” A **BLUNK** was “a squall,” **GURGE** was “a whirlpool,” and **GUSSOCK** “a strong sudden gust.” I confess I am attracted by **BEAGLE BALLS**—“meat rissoles served in the R.N. College, Dartmouth,” and **HARRIET LANE**—“preserved meat, from an unfortunate young woman who was murdered and chopped up.”

I like, too, **PURSER'S GRINS**—Satirical sneers, and **BUMBLEJAR**—The chaplain's harmonium; to **CLIMB THE RIGGING**—Lose one's temper; **DOUGHY NOSED**—said of a seaman in love; and **FIRE ESCAPE**—A chaplain in the U.S. Navy; **IRISH HURRICANE**—A flat calm with drizzling rain; to **LIE LIKE A FLATFISH**—To lie adroitly; To **MUSTER YOUR BAG**—To be seasick; **PADDY'S LANTERN**—The moon; To **PICK A SOFT PLANK**—To find an easy job; **POKER-PUSHER**—A naval stoker; **RAM REEL**—An old naval name for a dance on shipboard, in which there are no ladies present;

**ROUND THE BEND**—Mad, and **HALF-ROUND THE BEND**; **SEA PHEASANT**—A bloater or kipper; **STEAM KETTLE** and **SMOKE BOAT**—Old sailors' terms of contempt for the steamer; to **SWAY ALL TOP ROPES**—To give oneself airs; **TOP HAT PARTY**—Naval ratings entered for hostilities only; to **ACCRUE CHOCOLATE**—In the Navy, to make oneself popular with the officers; To **BEAT THE BOOBY**—To keep warm by swinging the arms and beating the hands; **BLOWING MARLINE-SPIKES**—A full gale.

I am sorry, however, to note the number of disparaging titles bestowed by the older seamen upon the young and tender. As, for example:

**CRAB**—A midshipman.

**WONK**—A useless hand, or a young naval cadet who has not yet learnt the elements of his job.

**WART**—A naval cadet. A.P.H.

○ ○

### Censorious

(A recent Press report)

**T**HE Censor in the States is a solemn man and serious; He naturally hates The occult and mysterious; The slightest sign or mark, Though innocently meant, He looks upon as dark And of sinister intent.

The soldier (called a “Doughboy”) When in foreign parts you find him Gets a flow of letters (oh, boy!) From the Girl He Left Behind Him,

And she, like all her sex,  
Is rarely known to miss  
The cross or large-size X  
That represents a kiss.

The Censor looked awry  
At these tributes of esteem  
Which to his official eye  
Bore the likeness of a scheme  
To evade the “Stern Recorder”  
With improper information,  
So he put abroad an order  
That postal osculation  
To get over with success  
Must be written, full and raw,  
Each a K I double-S.  
And the Censor's word is law.

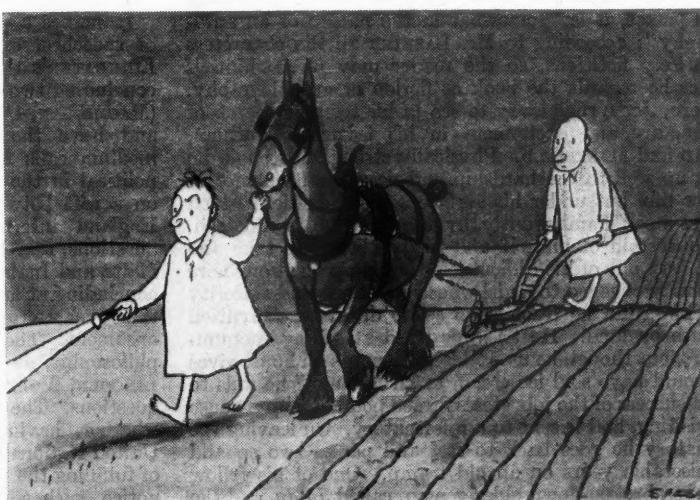
How the edict's been received  
By those girls I've yet to learn;  
I imagine they'd be peeved  
But it isn't my concern;  
What leaves me at a loss  
Is the Censor's supposition  
That the large-size X or cross  
Is matter for suspicion.

Did he not when young and tender  
Get a letter—even one—  
Which the youthful female sender  
Finished off as these have done?  
Has he never known the bliss  
Of perusing at the end  
An epistolary kiss  
From his little lady friend?  
Does a rigid sense of duty  
Make him iron in his dealings  
With the sweetie and the cutie  
Who would codify her feelings?

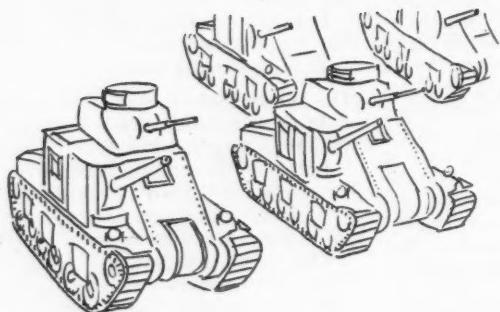
\* \* \* \* \*

Is he just a cold machine?  
Is he that? Or merely green?

DUM-DUM.



“We must look daft, ploughing when we ought to be in bed.”



ACANTHUS

*"And get that belt blanchoed, Higgins, before coming on parade again."*

### Our Booking-Office (By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

#### A Merchant Seaman

MR. FRANK LASKIER'S *Log Book* (ALLEN AND UNWIN, 5/-) is an unusually well-written narrative of a merchant seaman's life before and during the present war. According to the jacket, it is "somewhat in the nature of an autobiography"; according to Mr. LASKIER all the characters are entirely fictitious, so the reader may please himself whether he regards the book as fiction or autobiography. The hero, *Jack*, runs away to sea in his teens in search of the romance and excitement in his favourite authors, CONRAD and MASEFIELD. Physically strong and tough, he stands up well to the hardship and occasional violence of his new life, but under his surface self-satisfaction, which displays itself flamboyantly by the time he is nineteen, he is uncertain of himself and ready always to take the easiest way out of his difficulties. During a spell on shore he becomes engaged to a girl whose sweetness and sincerity abash him, and he resolves to settle down to a civilized existence on land. He tries his hand at selling vacuum-cleaners, but though he uses "blandishments on housewives that would have sold ice cream to an Eskimo," he fails to make a success of the job, steals fifteen pounds from a house he is visiting, and is sent to a reformatory. On leaving the reformatory he goes back to sea, and passes two squalid and miserable years on an old tramp. One of his fellow sailors is a broken-down elderly man, called *Jordy*, and the most vivid and poignant episode in the book is the evening *Jordy* and *Jack* spend together at San Pedro, drinking

away the money they had meant to lay out on soap and dungarees. In describing the war at sea, Mr. LASKIER allows his taste for over-emphasis and false sentiment more scope than in the first half of the book. The torpedoing of *Jack's* ship, and his hours on a shark-encircled raft with a shattered leg, are brilliantly described, but on the whole this part of the book is less moving and less convincing than the earlier pages. *Jack's* bitterness when he returns home after his leg has been amputated is real; and when someone from the B.B.C. calls on him, having heard that he might have a story to tell, one understands his desire to give listeners-in more of a story than the B.B.C. was bargaining for. But one cannot accept as quite so convincing a purged and transfigured *Jack* speaking into the microphone with infinite humility. If he avoids easy effects, Mr. LASKIER should produce really good work.

H. K.

#### Muscovite Versailles

The essential culture of a nation seldom "travels." One has only to look round at the modes exported by France in the eighteenth century to marvel that such pinchbeck should have imposed itself—even on Germans and Russians—as genuine ore. The native Russian lode, however, was so deep down, and the subjects of PETER THE GREAT so sunk in bestiality, that a vigorous veneer of eclectic civilization was all that even PETER could hope to impose on the boyars and peasants who were equally his serfs. With Holland in his mind's eye and Versailles in his methods, PETER began the building of "Sankt Peterburkh" on piles in the Neva and the corpses of his labourers; and it is the rise of this *Palmyra of the North* (FABER, 16/-) that is the gruesome and grandiose theme of Mr. CHRISTOPHER MARSDEN'S entertaining narrative. Between PETER and CATHERINE (a German who reverted, with a Scots Jacobite architect, to Palladio) two burly empresses, ANNE and ELIZABETH, dominated most of the scene. Their imported talent—for the rich of those days were employers rather than collectors—was largely Italian; but it is the awakening of the Russian idiom which, as Mr. SACHEVERELL SITWELL points out in a delightful preface, is the main theme of this enterprising book.

H. P. E.

#### Big Talks

It makes a nice change to have conversations instead of speeches, especially in broadcasting. For Mr. ERIC LINKLATER'S three imaginary conversations, of which the concluding two appear in *The Raft and Socrates Asks Why* (MACMILLAN, 4/6), were intended and used for broadcasting, and have the spaciousness and wide application this medium calls for and seldom gets. These two are also political in the broadest sense. Six shipwrecked men lie on a raft between living and dying. Their thoughts on England intermingle, raising and answering awkward questions, searching and absolving conscience, considering Malta and India and self-control and self-government, and concluding at last that "we have given more" to the world than ever we took from it: it is a superb example of lyrical argument. The mood in *Elysium* is less lyrical and more philosophic, as befits the after-dinner talk of shades like LINCOLN, VOLTAIRE and Dr. JOHNSON, whom SOCRATES questions. The eternally detached observer is right to ask whether, having been unable to prevent the war, the United Nations (as they are now) may be supposed capable of fulfilling the peace. Even in *Elysium*, it is instructive to notice, such a discussion is not conducted without heat, but it remains one among gentlemen; and when evidence has been given by the new and individually less famous

immortals from the battlefields of the present it is BEETHOVEN, awaking from sleep, who provides the answer. "I was alone," he says, and asks "If they put all their minds together, will the sum not equal mine in desire, and vision, and determination?" And certainly there is something to be said for the irate old Shade's belief.

J. S.

### Fifty Years of Theatre

One dare hardly imagine the end that would overtake any lover of England, who was also a lover of the stage, if he tried to envisage the theatrical productions of the last fifty years as matter for the adventures of a soul among masterpieces. *Theatrical Cavalcade* (EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE, 12/6) is a sound review of the shows of the period precisely because it refuses to involve, much less commit, anything approaching soul in its vivacious and well-informed author. Drama, he says, reflects the psychological climate of the age; and no one can rival Mr. ERNEST SHORT in describing that climate's variations. His own reactions to it are neither here nor there. Even the *obiter dicta* of dramatists and actors are parsimoniously scattered over pages of chronicle as "unfired" as a fruitarian's lunch. Most of us, however, will be grateful for so honest a chance of reviving our own experiences and reconsidering our own judgments; and on matters of fact our author is here to render us every assistance. The peak of his period is, of course, SHAW; and a happy lapse into self-expression permits Mr. SHORT to look forward to the time when something less discouraging to humanity than spiritual bear-baiting is the hall-mark of our greatest dramatist. H. P. E.

### Family Party

Every now and then one meets in fiction a best-selling family, random and selfish, full of vices and full of charm. They may have a Constant Nymphish air about them or they may be rich and vague. Anyway, they are recognizable instantly and their authors are as fortunate as Miss STELLA MORTON is sure to be when the people at Matravers Manor become known. *Gayling* (a really naughty name!) Luker is the hero, and a first-class cad besides being a musical genius with the looks and attributes of a *Lancelot*. Then there is the charmed and steadfast girl who marries him and tells the story. There is *Lady Mary*, a lovely mother with no money sense; *Willa*, the daughter who marries the chauffeur; *Ursula Wynne*, the actress, who steals *Gayling* away, and several other casuals. *Gayling* has, as a sardonic friend tells him, the power "to dramatise a dung-heap," just as Miss MORTON has power to breathe grace into her strange family of "unfinished symphonies." Her book, *Garden of Paradise* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 8/6), will be read greedily by some, reluctantly and with slight shame by others, but it will be read.

B. E. B.

### Philosophers Stone-Cold

There appeared about the court of LOUIS XV in the days of Madame DE POMPADOUR, a fellow who was the Wandering Jew, or an English spy, or the Evil One in person, according as your fancy dictated. With a breezy display of very dubious diamonds and mysterious veiled references to Black Magic, he imposed his inscrutable countenance and his unbounded impudence on the luxury-sated idlers of a decadent period. Generally credited with power to supply new-made gold or the Elixir of Life, in fact he produced nothing more remarkable—in Mr. GEORGE R. PREEDY's account of him, *The Courtly Charlatan* (JENKINS, 16/-)—than some passable lipstick and antacid pills (for sale); yet he

managed to keep the exalted circles he frequented in a state of perpetually and wearisomely renewed expectation that was unfailingly disappointed. The writer has written of him so realistically that the first fifty pages or more of this book repeat its opening statements over and over again with mounting tedium, while the growing demand of court and reader for something blackly miraculous that is developed in the later chapters is met only by one or two irrelevant tales and an oppressive history of alchemy, devoid of every spark of infernal fire, supposedly delivered by the central figure. In the end charlatan and biography just fizzle out. One had come to realize that nothing would happen, and that was just what occurred.

C. C. P.

### Adventurous Reporting

Book after book comes along from our industrious and enterprising newspaper-men at various fronts, and the latest—*Retreat in the East* (HARRAP, 8/6)—is one of the best. Accredited war correspondents would seem to be allowed more latitude in this war than in the last, though Mr. O. D. GALLAGHER does complain that he was "frequently treated with suspicion" by the Services. Still, what a lot he contrived to see in Malaya and Burma! He opens with a visit to the Singapore Club a month or so before the Japanese attack, and is very scornful of the Big Business men (or *Tuans Besar*) whom he found there, lying in two long rows of low chairs in the lounge after lunch, somnolent and replete and apparently doing nothing whatsoever to help the war effort. Then our reporter went to Sarawak for the centenary of the White Rajah's rule, and after that was in Repulse and witnessed the sinking of that fine vessel and her consort, the *Prince of Wales*. He was rescued with a great deal of difficulty after some two hours in the water, and the black oil he swallowed gave him a severe indigestion. Intermingled with these adventures are a number of good stories, humorous and macabre. Though a South African by birth, Mr. GALLAGHER is full of praise for the soldiers from the mother country, who, he maintains, have not had their fair share of notice. He dedicates his book to the Prime Minister "in admiration and in wonder that he ever sleeps."

L. W.



"Of course, what you have to remember is that England is SMALLER than America."

## Sea Messing

**S**ECOND-Lieutenant Sympson and I sailed from the port of Blank on such-and-such a date in H.M.T.S. *Anonymous* in company with several dozens or hundreds or thousands of other troops.

On the first day a notice appeared in Daily Orders saying, in the curt Army way, that officers with experience as messing officers would report to the adjutant at 0900 hours the following morning.

"I was messing officer for two days at Burgheseter," said Sympson, "so I think it is my duty to hand in my name for this job."

Other officers with years of messing experience modestly refrained from handing in their names, and to the dismay of those who knew him, and had the interests of the men at heart, Sympson was appointed one of a triumvirate to supervise the men's mess. The two other messing officers were mild men, and as wax in the hands of Sympson.

"You two," said Sympson airily at their first meeting, "can supervise the marshalling of the men to their seats, and keep the mess-orderlies up to scratch, while I deal with complaints. Dealing with complaints is a job that requires tact and skill. If a man gets a very small bit of meat, for instance, you can, with a timely jest, turn his grouse into a good-humoured laugh."

I dropped into the men's mess next day to see Sympson at work. I saw a man stand up respectfully and hold out a very small piece of meat on the end

of a fork, and I guessed from Sympson's gesticulations that he was making a timely jest.

Several other men at the table, who had large pieces of meat, laughed heartily, and one man who had a chop weighing about half a pound almost went into hysterics, but the man who had complained looked gloomier than ever, and Sympson got quite annoyed with him.

"These men have no sense of humour," he said to me afterwards, "so I am going to try a new technique. I am going to appeal to their patriotism and point out that there is a war on and that they are lucky to get proper meals at all in the middle of the Atlantic or whatever other ocean it is that we are in the middle of. By rights they should only be getting bully beef and biscuits."

The new technique, however, did not meet with any more success than the old. The sense of injustice is probably the most deep-seated of the British virtues, and Private Jones did not see why he should have to be the only patriotic man, with a small piece of meat, at a table where thirteen presumably unpatriotic men had large pieces of meat.

"It is no good," said Sympson bitterly, "I shall have to take the complainers to the galley myself, and get them an extra bit of meat. I feel that I must satisfy them somehow, because I remember how annoyed I used to be when I was a sapper and didn't get satisfaction, either moral or material."

So the next day Sympson collected all the men who were dissatisfied with their meat, about half a dozen of them, and marched off with them towards the galley. A sense of direction, however, is not one of Sympson's strong points, and he lost his way. He took them into the baggage-room, through passages, and eventually arrived, followed by his protesting train, in the officers' lounge.

A steward led them ultimately to the galley, but Sympson admitted that the men seemed displeased, because during their long absence the orderlies, supposing them to have been overtaken with sea-sickness, had cleared their places and eaten their fruit tarts.

"The direct way," said Sympson, "is, after all, usually the best. I will settle this meat problem once and for all. It may be undignified and unusual, but on board ship one has to approach things from a new angle."

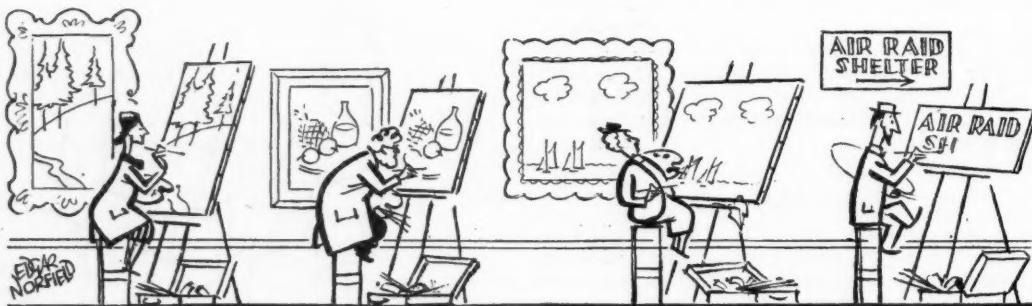
So now, as he tours the tables in search of complaints, he carries round with him a spare tin of meat, and when a man has not his legitimate portion he simply impales a piece on his fork from his tin and silences the complainer more effectively than proved possible with either wit or wisdom.

○ ○

### More Austerity

"... No person shall treat, use or consume any tramway rail: except (a) as part of a tramway or railway track."

*From Emergency Powers (Defence) Regulations.*



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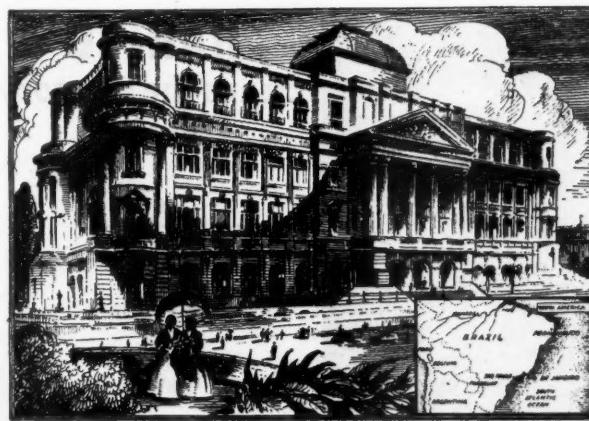


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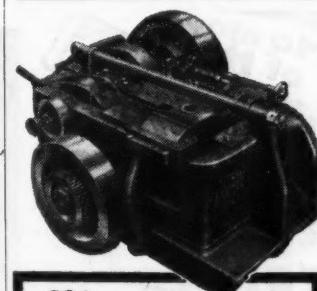
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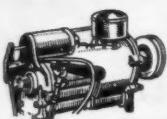
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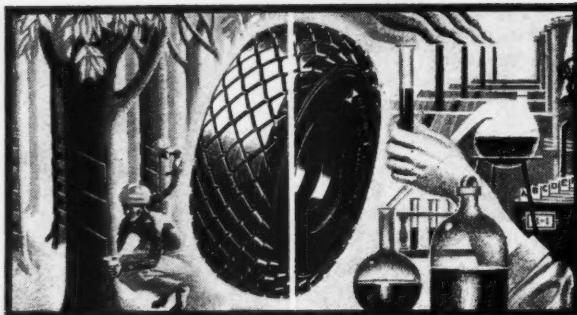


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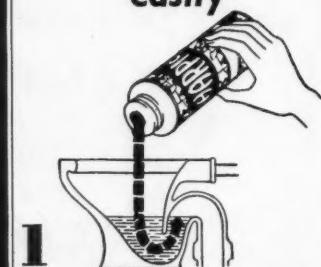
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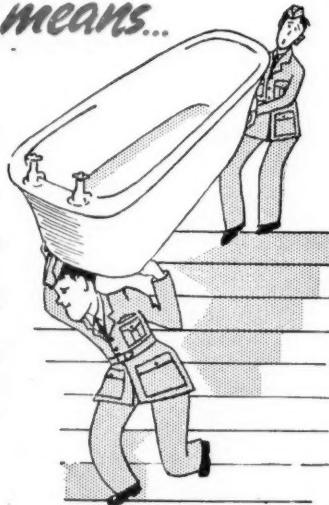
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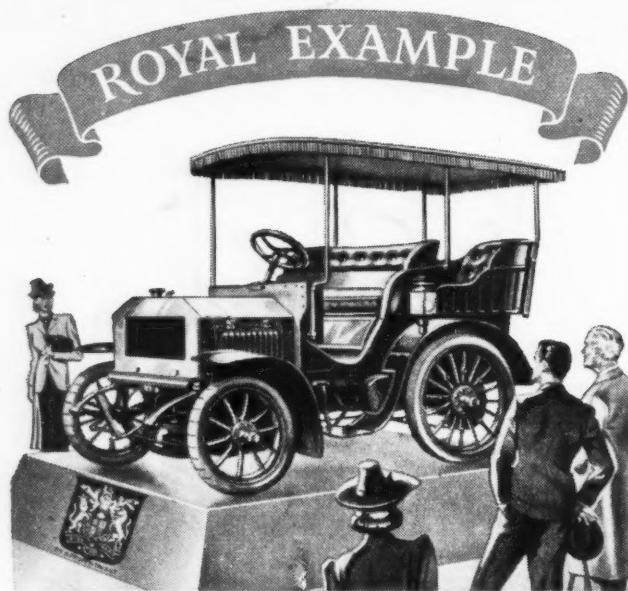


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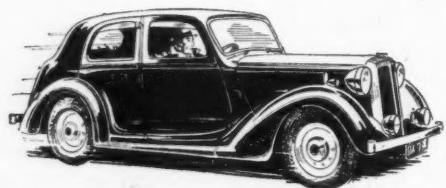
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